

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 19, 1880.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOAR, from the Committee on Patents, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 915.]

*The Committee on Patents, to whom was referred the bill (S. 915) for the relief of Edgar Huson, have considered the same, and report :*

Edgar Huson, of Ithaca, N. Y., a blacksmith, obtained letters patent on the 17th of February, 1857, for an improved gearing for wagons. This is an invention of very great ingenuity, value, and importance. It consists in hanging the body of the wagon upon a platform composed of two splinter-bars connected at their rear ends to a head-block; said frame-work resting upon three springs, two of which are secured upon the axle, the third connecting the rear ends of the former two also; and in the mode of attaching the pole or thills to a draught-bar, which is secured between the splinter-bars.

The specification being defective, a new patent was issued to Huson March 5, 1867.

An extension of said patent was granted to petitioner for seven years from the 16th day of February, 1871. The specification being still defective, he was compelled to surrender his extended patent, and the same was reissued on the 28th of September, 1875.

Huson was unable to bring his invention into general use until 1870 for the reason that the art of making springs suited to his style of wagon was not understood. He used all reasonable effort to introduce his wagon without success, giving rights to territory to induce persons to aid in bringing the invention to public notice, and assigning one half the patent for a nominal sum, in 1868, to William Halsey, who with fidelity and energy, but without success, exerted himself for its introduction. In 1870, a manufacturer of springs succeeded in making springs by machinery suited to Huson's platform-wagon. The invention then for the first time came into extensive use, and about \$2,000 were received as royalty on the patent. In 1871 a strong and extensive combination was formed to break down the patent, issuing circulars and calling for contributions to break down the patent. Suits were brought against infringers, which resulted in a decree fully sustaining the patent, in the circuit court in New York, in June, 1877. In prosecuting these suits the patentee expended more than all his receipts from the patent.

It appears that, without the slightest fault, the patentee has enjoyed the benefit of his patent less than two years. The committee do not place great stress upon the fact that the original specification was defective. The invention was in advance of the time, and has only become profitable by reason of the ability of the manufacturers of wagon-springs

to supply them at a cheap rate. We think it reasonable that the inventor should derive a reasonable reward from the great benefit he has conferred on the public.

Mr. Huson is a poor man, and has had a shock of paralysis which impairs his power of speech and the use of one leg. Mr. Halsey, the owner of the other half of the patent, is insane. Their rights in this patent are their only means of support, with trifling exception.

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